14. During the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES, which was held from 3rd to 15th June, 2007 at The Hague, India introduced a resolution along with China, Nepal and the Russian Federation, with directions to Parties with operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale, for restricting such captive populations to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers. The resolution was adopted as a decision with minor amendments. Further, India made an intervention appealing to China to phase out tiger farming, and eliminate stockpiles of Asian big cats body parts and derivatives. The importance of continuing the ban on trade of body parts of tigers was emphasized.

Reintroduction of Tigers

15. As a part of active management to rebuild Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves where tigers have become locally extinct, reproduction of tigers/tigresses have been done.

Creation of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF)

16. The policy initiatives announced by the Finance Minister in his Budget Speech of 29.2.2008, *inter-alia*, contains action points relating to tiger protection. Based on the one time grant of Rs. 50.00 crore provided to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for raising, arming and deploying a Special Tiger Protection Force, the proposal for the said force has been approved by the competent authority for 13 tiger reserves. Rs. 93 lakhs each has been released to Corbett, Ranthambhore & Dudhwa Tiger Reserve for creation of STPF during 2008-09. Central Assistance will be provided to States for creation of STPF in remaining 10 Tiger Reserves in 2009-10.

Himalayan Ski Village Project

902. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gobind Ballabh Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) has been asked about its observation over setting up of any projects in the fragile environment of Himalayan region;

(b) if so, whether the views of GBPIHED have been sought with regard to setting up of the proposed Himalayan Ski Village project in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the details of the report submitted by the GBPIHED and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Madam.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

Ecological Values of Wetlands

903. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: